

# THE VIRGINIA TEACHER

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### VIEWS OF OUR EDUCATIONAL CONTEMPORARIES

#### COLLEGE TRAINING IS WORTH NEARLY A THOUSAND DOLLARS A YEAR TO MIDDLE WEST FARMERS

That a college education is the best investment a young farmer can make is shown by investigations in various agricultural regions of the country, reported by the University of Missouri Bulletin. Not only do the results show that a college graduate makes more money than a common-school graduate, but that a high-school graduate also has a monetary advantage in proportion.

Of tenant farmers in Indiana, Illinois, and Iowa, it is shown that the labor income of the man with a high-school education averages \$526 more than that of the man with only a common-school education. A further increase of \$453 is earned by the man with a college education, making the difference in labor income of the common-school graduate and that of the college graduate \$979. Approximately the same result appears from a survey of the incomes of 635 Kansas farmers.

Of 409 farmers in Nebraska, those who had attended high school made 32.1 per cent more than those who had had only a common-school course. Men who attended college make 19.7 per cent more than the high-school men, giving the college man an advantage over the common-school man of 51.8 per cent.

In an inquiry as to those who earned more than \$1,000 a year, a Cornell Uni-

versity report shows that while 5 per cent of the farmers with a district-school education were in the class that had labor incomes of more than \$1,000, 30 per cent of those with more than a high-school education were in that class. This report estimates a high-school education to be worth as much to a farmer as \$6,000 worth of 5 per cent bonds, and a college education nearly twice as much.—*School Life*.

## WORKING WOMEN AS STUDENTS

Bryn Mawr College is trying a summer summer school experiment this year that is a novelty in this country, although somewhat similar ventures have proved successful in England. It is of unusual interest, and, if it works well, may prove to be of great value, not merely to those who will benefit directly but to industry at large.

This summer school, to be held for two months beginning June 15, is to recruit its students from the ranks of women workers in factories, stores and other industries from all parts of the country. Candidates as young as 18 years will be admitted if they show sufficient qualification, but it is expected that most students will be older women, up to about 35 years. The primary purpose is stated to be the development along "broad and constructive lines of young women of character and ability who have shown a natural aptitude for leadership so that they may exercise an increasing influence in the social and industrial world."

Therein lies the signal value of such a school: it recognizes that the primary need of labor is better, more enlightened, more fully equipped leadership. Such education offers the best answer possible to ideas based upon inadequate knowledge of elemental facts.

But it is also significant that the college in giving this opportunity is assuming no attitude of grandmotherly superiority or dictatorial authority. Its attitude is rather that of the elder or more fortunate sister who is willing to help. The school is to be under a joint control, representing on the one hand the college and on the other a committee of the women workers themselves. And the courses of instruction offered are those actually requested by the students themselves. The selection thus made is striking. English and literature head the list, followed by eco-



nomics, history, elementary law, physiology and hygiene, the "origin and evolution of the earth and of life," psychology and "appreciation of art." Such a choice made by more or less mature young women without class predisposition, is in itself a fine testimony of faith in the practical value of cultural education.

The British prototype of this school was founded at Ruskin College, Oxford, in 1899 on a small scale. If the idea works well at Bryn Mawr, there is no obvious reason why other college and university "plants" should not be put to the same uses in summer. The experiment will be worth watching.—*Baltimore American*.

#### AN APPEAL FOR OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Throughout the country, teachers are now being selected and salaries fixed for the coming year. Hundreds of thousands of public school teachers will be employed during the next few weeks. In recognition of the momentous importance of this fact, the National Education Association has given out the following appeal to school boards and citizens:

This is no time for extravagance in governmental expenditures. Appropriations should be carefully scrutinized and all unnecessary items eliminated. The times demand the application of the best business principles in the conduct of public affairs.

However, there can be no retrenchment in the support of education. Money wisely expended for this purpose is an investment in citizenship and an insurance against the revolutionary conditions which exist in countries whose peoples are ignorant and illiterate.

Our free public school system is an integral part of our free government, essential to its life and prosperity. The only secure foundation for democracy is an enlightened and intelligent electorate. A government of the people and by the people can be no better and no stronger than the composite citizenship of which it is constituted.

This fact was recognized by the far-seeing statesmen who founded this Nation. William Penn declared that the only way to preserve free government was by the education of all its citizens, "for which," said he, "spare no cost, for by such parsimony all that is saved is lost." Washington urged his countrymen "to promote as objects of

primary importance institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge." Jefferson, Adams, and Madison taught that the education of all the people furnishes the greatest safeguard for our free institutions.

The greatest need of our country today is competent, well-qualified teachers to train the future citizens of the Nation. We must get rid of the incompetent and unprepared in our public schools. The schools of tomorrow should be taught only by the best, and the profession of teaching must be made so inviting that it will attract and hold the best. Any reduction in the salaries of teachers or any failure properly to appreciate the importance of education will turn from the teaching profession those young men and women now preparing for their life's work who should be secured for this most important field of public service.

Let us cut down expenditures for luxuries. Let us reduce appropriations wherever it can be done with safety, but for the perpetuity of those ideals and principles which are nearest to the hearts of the American people, there can be no backward step in the development of a strong, intelligent, patriotic citizenry, upon whom must depend the preservation of the things for which we have made such sacrifice in blood and treasure. The hope of America is in her free public schools. To elevate their standards and promote their efficiency should be the purpose of every American statesman and citizen.—*N. E. A. Press Service*.

#### HIGH STANDARD AND LOW PAY

The pay of teachers is adequate only when it results in giving to all the schools competent teachers, teachers fitted for their great work by native ability and disposition, by general education, by professional instruction and training, and by experience both in school and in the practical things of life.—*P. P. Claxton*.

Such is the standard for the American public school teachers as set forth by the United States Commissioner of Education. It is no arbitrary standard he has evolved. He has merely formulated and enunciated the demands made upon the man or woman who aspires to teach by the patrons of the public school—the parents who send their boys and girls there to be educated.

It is a high standard, but not too high. In any other profession or business one



measuring up to it could command his own salary, and it would be written in imposing figures. It is not so in the schoolroom. There is such a wide discrepancy between what the American public demands in education and what it is willing to pay, that it is no matter for surprise that thousands of cultured, devoted men and women who can meet the Claxton standard are refusing to work for a shameful pittance and are seeking more remunerative fields.

The South, with its professedly high ideals, is the greater offender. Its figures tell a disgraceful story. In the matter of average salary paid to all their teachers, according to the figures of Mr. Claxton, ten of the Southern States are at the bottom of the list. Only three Northern States, West Virginia, Maine and Vermont, are so meager in their rewards to the teachers, and they pay more than any of the Southern States, with the exception of Louisiana and Texas.

Read a part of the list, see what the average annual salary is, and it will not be necessary to seek further for the reason why the world taunts the South with its illiteracy: North Carolina, \$284; Mississippi, \$291; South Carolina, \$315; Alabama, \$345; Kentucky, \$344; Georgia, \$366; Tennessee, \$370; Florida, \$383; Virginia, \$385. In these same Southern States the average salary in the city schools is little better. Here in Virginia it is \$587; in the rural schools, \$314, and in the high schools, \$819.

What a travesty on education it is to demand such qualifications as Mr. Claxton outlines, and then ask the teacher meeting them to devote his time and his service to a public that is so unappreciative and ungrateful as to offer a salary of \$314 a year in the country, or \$587 if he takes a place in the city! What unskilled day laborer would not laugh to scorn one so foolishly audacious as to ask him to work for such a beggarly sum.

While the South is the greatest offender the country as a whole has cause for shame at what it pays its teachers. The average rural salary for all the States is only \$479, for city teachers, \$854; for high school teachers, \$1,099, with a general average for all teachers of \$635. Is it any wonder that education has become a grave national problem?

Either the standard must be lowered, or the emoluments must be raised. If the first is unthinkable—as it is—then the latter is necessary. The public should understand that the teaching profession must be adequately paid if its effectiveness is to continue. Virginia is low in the list, only eight States paying lower salaries, but it is waking up to the conditions and necessities, and before long we hope to see it leading the movement for decent salaries to teachers who can qualify to the standard.—*Richmond Times-Dispatch.*

#### BRITISH AMBASSADOR SPEAKS

"I believe most profoundly that it is the duty of every university to plant in the minds of its intellectual children a true understanding of the cost of war, so that never lightly will they let their Nation turn to the dread arbitrament of arms. I have acknowledged that in the world as it is the choice for a nation may be to fight or die, but I believe that now is the time for the English-speaking people, with their great and peculiar advantages, to resolve that never again will they permit the fair world to be devastated by unnecessary war if by standing firmly together they can prevent it.—*Sir Auckland Geddes, at University of Virginia Centennial Celebration.*

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### RECOGNIZING THE PRINCIPLES THAT SHOULD GOVERN THE TEACHING OF SPELLING

THE TEST AND STUDY SPELLER, by Daniel Starch and George A. Mirick. Boston: Silver, Burdett and Company. 1921. First Book, 90 pages. Second Book, 63 pages. Third Book, 64 pages.

LIPPINCOTT'S HORN-ASHBAUGH SPELLER, by Ernest Horn and Ernest J. Ashbaugh. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company. 1921. 105 pages. (60 cents).

Later than perhaps any other common school subject, spelling is just now coming to be regarded as a subject which must be taught and in which it is possible to distinguish between good methods and bad methods. There have been in recent years various revisions of old spelling books, particularly in respect to excluding uncommon and fantastic words from the content; but until now there have been no spellers built in conformity with the